

Ghent University



Automatics Consulting bvba – AC#



# Publication Writing Aid v2.0

## Manual

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# 1. Introduction Publication Writing Aid Version 1.0 manual

## 1.1 Background

To increase transparency and completeness of research manuscripts, research-reporting guidelines are developed<sup>1</sup>. Research reporting guidelines are tools for authors and reviewers to ensure completeness and transparency of reporting. They are organized mainly as a checklist, explicit text, a flow diagram or a combination between these three elements and specify the items to be reported in a published study<sup>2</sup>. An essential element of a reporting guideline is a list of items that are considered essential information to be included in each section of the research paper (example in figure 1). Reporting guidelines commonly organise these items according to the typical sections of a research paper<sup>3</sup> with typically various items per section (example figure 1). It is important to note that reporting guidelines and checklists are tools to help researchers and should in no way restrict writing style or interfere with the editorial or review process.

Use of reporting guidelines has been enforced by various journals. When authors submit papers to the journal, they are required to fill out a table with the items and indicate where these items are described in the paper. As such however, this approach introduces the guidelines at the final stages i.e. right before submission for publication, thereby making the user of reporting guidelines administrative procedure rather than a help for authors during write-up.

## 1.2 Goal

The goal of this project is to make the use of reporting guidelines easier during the write-up of a research paper by developing a writing aid in the form of Add-in in MS word (instead of a checklist). The writing aid will propose the items of existing reporting guidelines as a base for the writing of an article presenting scientific findings. The tool will be evaluated in an intervention study as described in Annex 1 and should be developed to suit this study.

In brief, in a research paper written in MS Word, parts of the text will be tagged by the authors or co-authors during write-up and linked to items of the checklist. The added values is the following

- For the authors and co-authors, this will provide a tool to see how recommended items are described in the text so suggestions can be made accordingly;
- For reviewers/editors, this will enable (i) identifying which text fragments correspond to the different reporting items using visual indications in the text (ii) obtain a summary of the different reporting items and corresponding page numbers and tagged text.

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<sup>1</sup> EQUATOR gives an overview of reporting guidelines and a state of the art of the topic ([www.equator-network.org](http://www.equator-network.org))

<sup>2</sup> Note: not all items are always relevant for a particular paper. There might be very good reasons why an author decides not to address specific items, but in general, a good justification is helpful to guide reviewers in this case.

<sup>3</sup> Usually Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion and Conclusion

These functions will produce a manuscript with additional information, embedded in the manuscript, that can travel with the paper during submission to a journal to facilitate the review process.

### 1.3 Notes

This Add-on software is thoroughly tested for the following combinations:

- Windows 7 with Microsoft Word 2013
- Windows 10 with Microsoft Word 2007

For any problems with the add-on, please contact Automaticals Consulting – AC#:

[info@automaticals.com](mailto:info@automaticals.com)

**IMPORTANT: if you have Mendeley Citation Plugin, you need to deactivate it for the writing aid to work!**

## 2. Install Add-on

First, you will have to download or copy the Install.zip file on your pc or laptop and extract all files in the zip-file. In the unzipped directory you can find the install.dotm file.

**Note: You CAN NOT run the installation out of the Install.zip map! You have to extract all files first and run the installation out of the unpacked (unzipped) map!**

Please follow the next steps to install the Writing aid add-on:

- 1) Double click install.dotm
- 2) Enable Macros (see fig.1)
- 3) Click the check mark in the top menu bar (see fig.1)
- 4) Close MS Word completely (close all open MS Word documents)
- 5) Start MS Word or open a MS Word document
- 6) An extra menu tab is added: "Publication Writing Aid" (see fig.1)

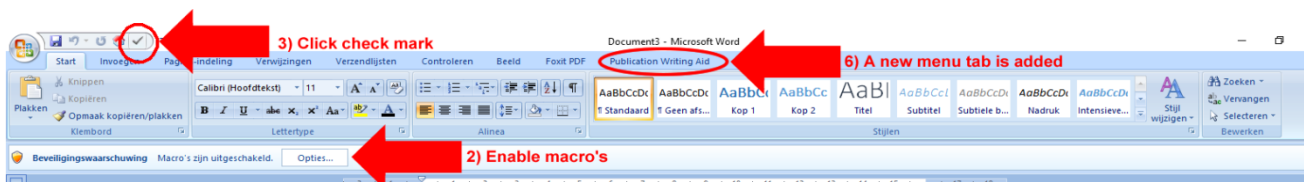


Figure 1: Screenshot of MS Word 2007 menu

**Note: You will have to run this installation for each user profile on your pc! If you are logged in as user 'John' on the pc and ran the installation, the add-on will be present or updated in MS Word only for the user 'John'. To install or update the add-on for the user 'Maria' you will have to logon as the user 'Maria' and run the installation again.**

### 3. Use Checklist table

#### 3.1 Insert a Checklist table

During the install of the add-on following checklists are copied in to the checklist directory:

- CONSORT 2010
- PRISMA 2009
- STROBE-Nut

These tables are standardized tables to be able to work with the Publication Writing Aid Add-on. Each user has the opportunity to add a checklist table in to the foreseen directory (see chapter: Add Checklist table) but beware that the Add-on will only work with a standardized checklist table (see chapter: Checklist table standard)

To insert a checklist table into a document go to the “Publication Writing Aid”-tab in the MS Word menu and click on the “Choose Checklist” button in the ribbon. A popup window will open with a dropdown menu. In this dropdown menu you can choose between all the checklists available in the Checklist table directory (see fig. 2).

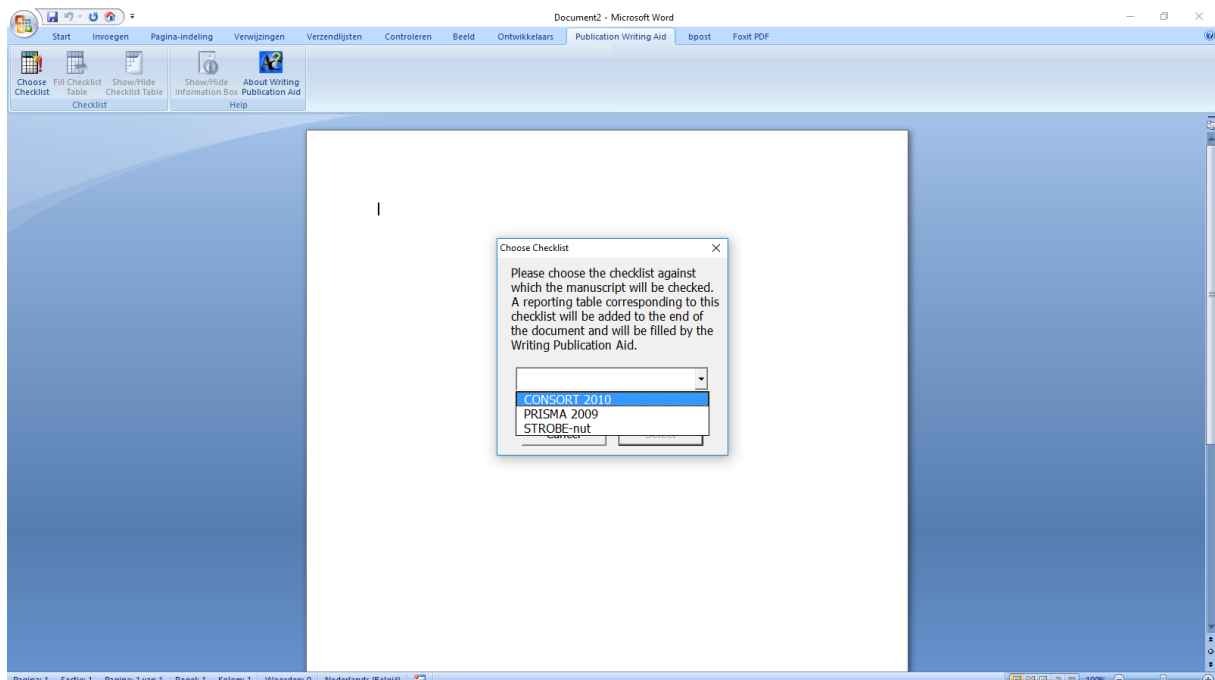


Figure 2: Popup window with dropdown menu

Choose the checklist table you want by clicking on it and push the “Select” Button on the popup window. A progress bar will appear (see fig. 3) during which all the needed files will be copied to the right directory and a checklist table will be added at the end of your document. A right-mouse

button menu will also be added for this document, used to tag and untag text (see further in this manual).

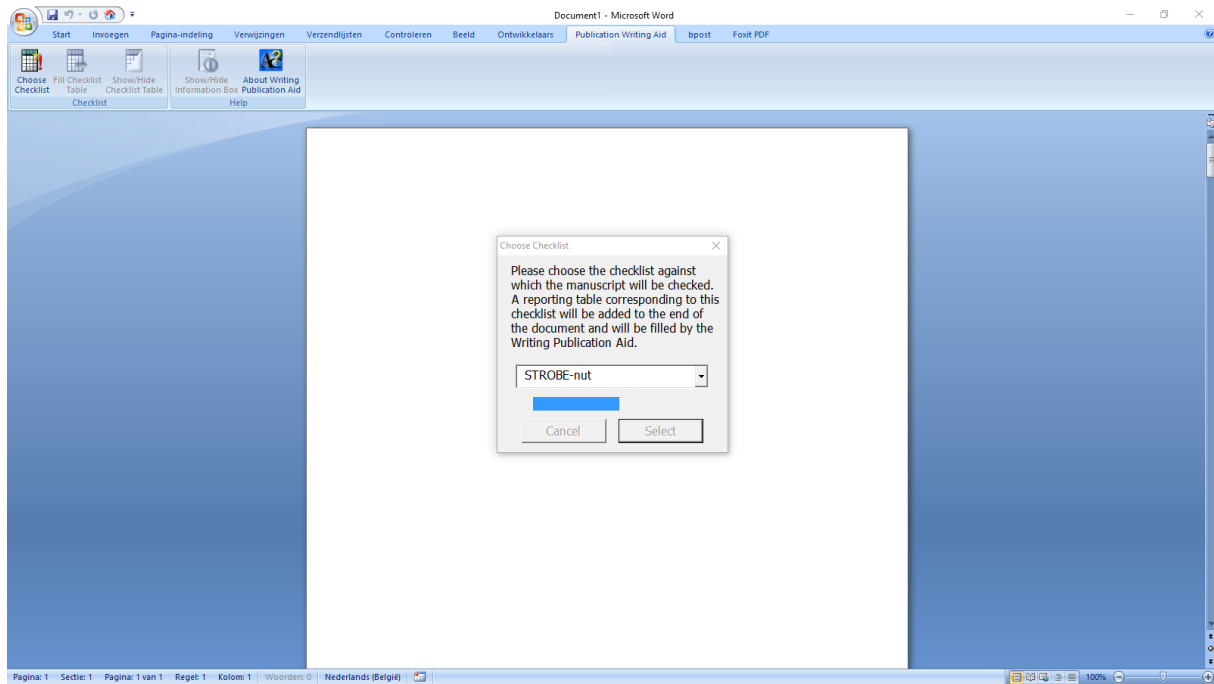


Figure 3: Popup window with progress bar while inserting a checklist table

**Note:** If you insert a certain checklist table for the first time, it can take a few seconds to install and copy everything in place and before you get back in control of your document. Once you have inserted a certain checklist table, an insert in a new document of the same table will go much faster.

## 3.2 Tag text in the document

To tag text, highlight the text and push the right mouse button. In the right mouse button menu you will see the Publication Writing Aid menu item on the bottom. Hover over the menu item and hover over the “tag” menu item of the submenu. Then choose the checklist item this text had to be tagged to by clicking on it (see fig.4)

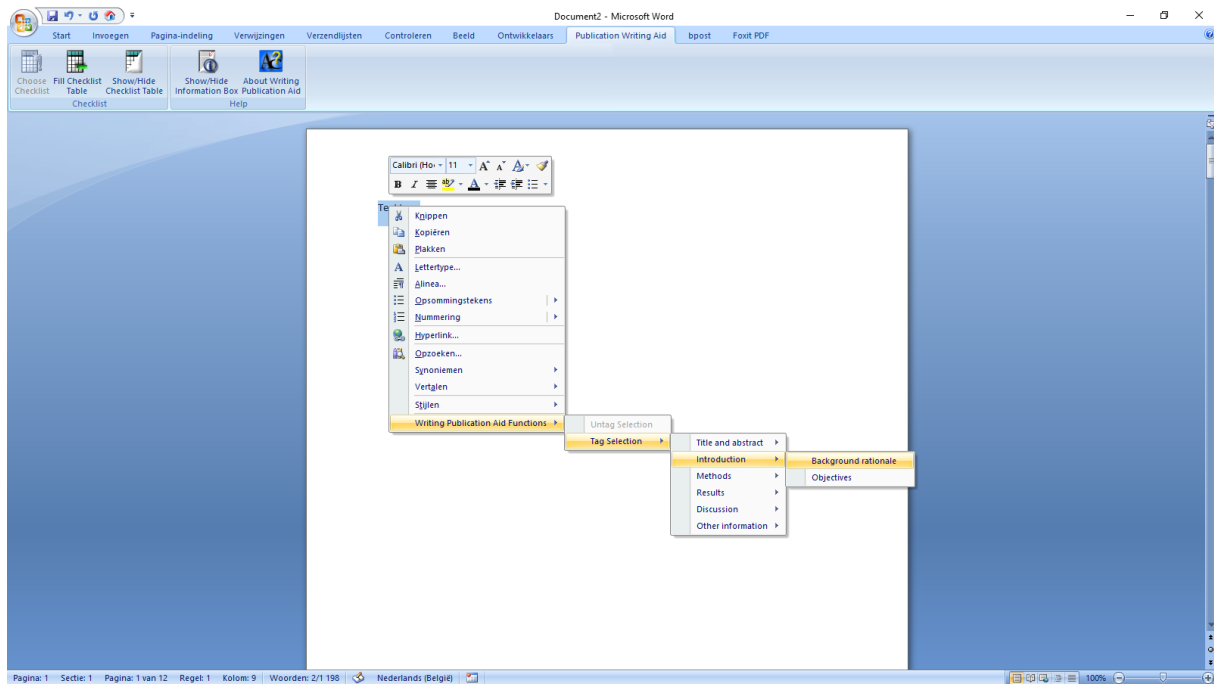


Figure 4: Right click mouse button menu

A comment field will be added pointing to the tagged text and the tagged text will be added in the checklist table at the end of the document together with the page number where this text can be found. In the checklist table you can jump to the tagged text by holding down the Ctrl-button and clicking on the text or the page number in the table.

### 3.3 Untag text in the document

To untag a tagged section of the document highlight the section you want to untag and push the right mouse button. Go to the Publication Writing Aid menu item and choose the “untag” submenu item. A pop-up window will appear with all the tagged sections that are available in the highlighted text. You can choose the tagged section you want to untag by selecting it. This line in the popup window will get highlighted. In case there are more than one tagged sections in the highlighted text in the document, you can also choose several tagged section to be untagged by holding down the Ctrl-button while selecting the tagged sections.

Once you made your selection, push the untag button. The specific comments will be deleted and the specific text will also be deleted from the checklist table at the end of the document.

**Note:** to be able to untag a section you will have to highlight at least the end of the tagged section. If the last character of the tagged section is not highlighted, this section will not appear in the list of tagged sections in the popup window. So make sure that you selected at least the last character of the tagged section before choosing the “untag” menu item.



### 3.4 Update Checklist table

The checklist table at the end of the document will be updated automatically when:

- A section is tagged
- A tagged section is untagged
- the text in a tagged section is changed
- the document is saved

Basically, the table will be updated automatically at all times and the tagging and the Checklist table at the end of the document will always be synchronic.

In case of a de-synchronisation between the tagged sections and the Checklist table, a synchronisation will be done by saving the document or on a next tagging- or untagging- action.

### 3.5 Fill Checklist table

Not all items are always relevant for a particular paper. There might be very good reasons why an author decides not to address specific items, but in general, a good justification is helpful to guide reviewers in the case.

To add such a justification, choose the “Fill Checklist Table” button in the Publication Writing Aid ribbon. A popup window (see fig.5) will appear where you can add the reason why you do not want to address a particular item the checklist table. By using the previous and next button the user can scroll through all the items. Once the reason has been entered in the text field of the chosen item, the checklist table will be updated by clicking on the previous, next or quit button. The entered reason will appear in the checklist table at the end of the document in red.

If the user wants to delete the reason or change it, he or she will have to open the “Fill Checklist Table” popup again (if closed) and go to the right item (by using the next or previous button). There he or she will have to change or delete the text (with the backspace key or selecting the text and using the delete key). By clicking on the previous, next or quit button, the checklist table will be updated.

The “reset” button will reset the content of the reason to the content before the change (as long as the table has not been updated by clicking the previous, next or quit button).

If you add a tagged section to a checklist item you previously addressed by the “Fill Checklist Table” functionality, a warning message will popup to make clear that the submitted text (through the “Fill Checklist Table” functionality) will be deleted if you go on with the tagging. So if you complete this tagging the previously submitted text will be deleted from the checklist table and will be replaced by the tagged text.

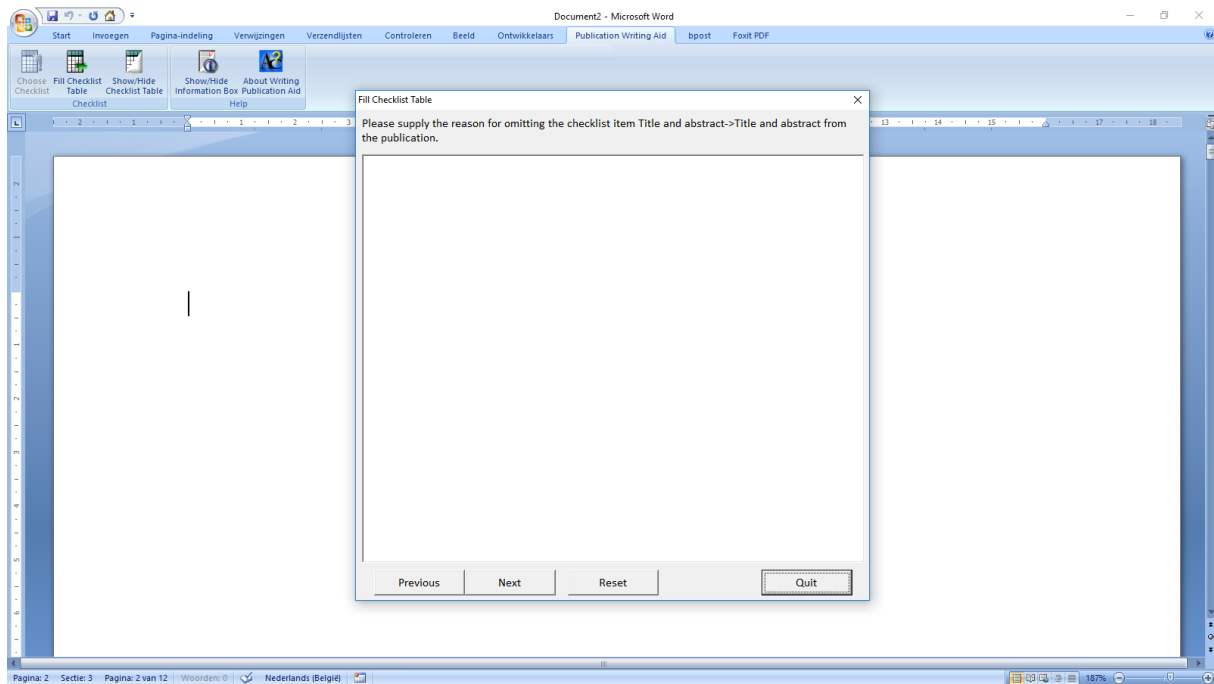


Figure 5: Popup window 'Fill Checklist table'

### 3.6 Show or hide the checklist table in the document

Standard, by inserting a checklist table the checklist table will be shown at the end of the document. If for some reason you want to hide the checklist table, click on the “Show/Hide Checklist table” button in the Publication Writing Aid menu ribbon.

The checklist table will no longer be shown in the document, but will still be active.

**Note: By hiding the checklist table, the table will NOT be deleted. It’s only hidden in the document and is still active.**

By clicking on the “Show/Hide Checklist table” button in the Publication Writing Aid menu ribbon again the checklist table will re-appear at the end of the document.

With the checklist table hidden, each tagging of a section will make the checklist table appear again.

### 3.7 Saving and opening a document with a checklist table

Saving the document is the same as saving a regular document but when saving a document with a checklist table the add-on will check and update the table for the last time. Especially with larger documents and a document with a lot of tags, this can take up a few seconds.

**Note: Saving a large document with many tags can take up some time, even up to 10 seconds.**

Opening a document with a checklist table is the same as opening a regular document, however it can take some longer time, but not much. The add-on will recognize the checklist table and the user will not be able to add a new checklist table to the document. Once the document is opened the user can start using the add-on immediately.

## 4. Information box or Help

By clicking on the “Show/Hide Information Box” button in the Publication Writing Aid menu ribbon, you will open a Information Box or Help concerning the chosen Checklist.

The Information Box popup consists of two tabs:

- Select Checklist Item
- Checklist information

In the “Select Checklist Item” field you will find all the checklist items relevant to the chosen checklist in a menu structure.

By clicking on a certain checklist item in the menu, the second tab will open with all the information on this particular checklist item that is provided.

The content shown in the Checklist information tab (for a certain checklist item or extension) is kept in a .doc or .docx file in a specific directory. In most cases this directory has following path:

C:\Users\<User name>\App Data\Roaming\WritingPublicationAidFiles\Checklists\<Checklist name>\<Section title\_ Checklist item name\_ Extension name.docx>

In case your system files are on another partition (D-drive, E-drive,...) you will have to exchange the C:\ in the path with the right drive letter (D:\... or E:\... for example).

If the checklist item is greyed out (inactive link) there is no information file available.

If the checklist item is active but the information screen (tab) is empty, the information file is present but empty.

The information files are installed together with the add-on.

By clicking on the “Show/Hide Information Box” button in the Publication Writing Aid menu ribbon again, the Information box will be closed.

You are able to work in the document while the Information Box is shown.

However, one can edit the content by opening the specific file in MS Word, changing the content and saving the file again (in same directory without changing the name of the document). Next time you open the Checklist information (in the Information Box), the changes will appear in the Checklist information text. The name and extension of the file has to stay the same, otherwise the information will no longer be shown in the information box.

## 5. Add Checklist table

In case you want to use a checklist that is not standard installed with the Publication Writing Aid add-on, you are able to add a checklist table.

**Note: this new checklist table however has to be standardized for the add-on to be able to process it!**

The Publication Writing Aid add-on will use the titles in this table to create the right mouse button menu. This menu consists of several layers and each of these layers represents a specific column or a specific row of the checklist table.

The checklist table has to be made in MS Word and copied as a file with .doc or .docx extension. The table has to consists of 6 columns with following headers (has to be exact and in **bold**):

- Column 1: Section
- Column 2: Item no
- Column 3: Checklist item
- Column 4: Extension
- Column 5: Tagged section
- Column 6: Page no

See Fig.6 and Fig.7 for an example.

Section	Item no	Checklist item	Extension	Tagged section	Page no
<b>Title and abstract</b>	<b>Empty</b>		<b>Empty</b>	<b>Empty</b>	<b>Empty</b>
Title and abstract	1	(a) Indicate the study's design with a commonly used term in the title or the abstract. (b) Provide in the abstract an informative and balanced summary of what was done and what was found.	<b>nut-1</b> State the dietary/nutritional assessment method(s) used in the title, abstract, or keywords.	In case of several extensions for one section, there must be a specific title for each extension in bold!  Empty	Empty
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>Empty</b>		<b>Empty</b>	<b>Empty</b>	<b>Empty</b>
Background rationale	2	Explain the scientific background and rationale for the investigation being reported.		Empty	Empty
Objectives	3	State specific objectives, including any pre-specified hypotheses.		Empty	Empty
<b>Methods</b>	<b>Empty</b>		<b>Empty</b>	<b>Empty</b>	<b>Empty</b>
Study design	4	Present key elements of study design early in the paper.		Empty	Empty
Settings	5	Describe the setting, locations, and relevant dates, including periods of recruitment, exposure,	<b>nut-5</b> Describe any characteristics of the study settings that might affect the dietary intake or	Empty	Empty

Figure 6: Standardized checklist table

		number of controls per case.			
Variables	7	Clearly define all outcomes, exposures, predictors, potential confounders, and effect modifiers. Give diagnostic criteria, if applicable.	<b>nut-7.1 Food</b> Clearly define foods, food groups, nutrients, or other food components.  <b>nut-7.2 Dietary patterns</b> When using dietary patterns or indices, describe the methods to obtain them and their nutritional properties.		
Data sources - measurements	8	For each variable of interest, give sources of data and details of methods of assessment (measurement). Describe comparability of assessment methods if there is more than one group.	<b>nut-8.1 Dietary assessment method(s)</b> Describe the dietary assessment method(s), e.g., portion size estimation, number of days and items recorded, how it was developed and administered, and how quality was assured. Report if and how supplement intake was assessed.  <b>nut-8.2 Food composition data</b> Describe and justify food composition data used. Explain the procedure to match food composition with consumption data. Describe the use of conversion factors, if applicable.  <b>nut-8.3 Nutrition</b>	ENTER!	

Figure 7: Standardized checklist table with more than 1 extensions for a section

**Important notes:**

**after the title of the extension (in bold) there needs to be a Enter or Return! (at the end of the title or between title and description)**

**No cell of the table may end with an Enter or Return!! So no empty lines!!**

**The columns “Tagged section” and “page no” have to be empty. Only the add-on itself can enter text or values in to these columns!**

Hereunder you can find the link between the checklist table and the several layers of the right mouse click menu.

Column 1 (Section):                    **Bold title** = Menu Layer 1

Normal title = Menu Layer 2

Column 4 (Extension):            **Bold title** = Menu Layer 3 (in case there is more than 1 extension for this specific section) (see Fig. 7)

Once you have created this checklist table you have to copy the file with the table in to the right directory. In most of the cases this directory is:

C:\\Users\\<User name>\\App Data\\Roaming\\WritingPublicationAidFiles\\Checklists\\

In case your system files are on another partition (D-drive, E-drive,...) you will have to exchange the C:\\ in the path with the right drive letter (D:\\... or E:\\... for example)

If the files is copied in the right directory, this checklist table should be present in the dropdown menu of the “Choose Checklist Table” popup window (see chapter 3.1).

## 6. Disable Add-on in MS Word

Once the add-on is installed, it is automatically enabled in each Word document. To disable the add-on in MS Word without uninstalling the Add-on completely, you have to follow the steps as described hereunder:

- Click on the Office button (left top of your MS Word screen),
- click on ‘Options for Word button’ (under right of the menu),
- open ‘Add-ins’,
- choose ‘Word Add-ins’ in the drop down menu left under in the screen,
- click on ‘Go’ (or ‘Start’),
- uncheck ‘WritingPublicationAid.dotm’ and click the ‘OK’-button.

The Writing Publication Aid tab will disappear from the MS Word menu.

To enable the add-on again, follow the same steps and check the 'WritingPublicationAid.dotm' add-in again. The Writing Publication Aid tab will appear again in the MS Word menu and the add-on is functional again.

## 7. Uninstall Add-on

**Note: to upgrade to a newer version of the Writing Publication Aid add-on, it is NOT needed to uninstall the older version first. The newer version will install itself over the older version.**

To uninstall the add-on completely and to delete the files created during the installation of the add-on follow the following steps:

- Close all MS word documents,
- go to the Install directory and double-click on the Uninstall.dotm file in the unzipped directory,

**Note: if the install directory is not present anymore on your pc, please download the install.zip again, unpack all the files in the zipped directory again.**

- click on the white cross symbol in the top menu of the MS Word document the opened (see fig.8) ,
- choose if you want to delete all checklists files (checklists and help files) in the WritePublicationAid directory or not (see fig.9),
- a popup will show when the uninstall is done,
- close the popup and the word document.

The Write Publication Aid add-on is completely uninstalled.

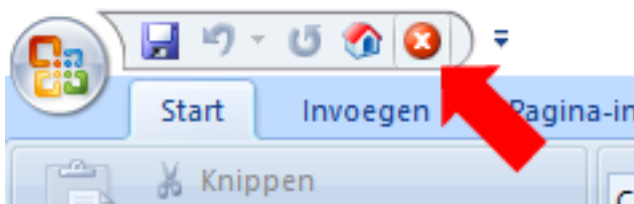


Fig. 8: White cross symbol

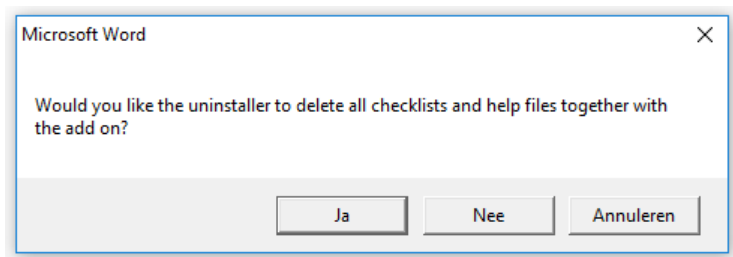


Fig. 9: Uninstaller popup

## 8. Troubleshooting

In this chapter you can find some issues we encountered during testing of the add-on on different computers and different versions of Word.

### 1. Error message “The file WritingPublicationAid.dotm is already in use”

Error: In some cases opening a MS Word document out of the Windows Explorer (and not via the file open in Word itself) while there is already a Word document (and Word instance) opened with the WritingPublicationAid activated, starting the add-on can generate a error stating that the “WritingPublicationAid.dotm” file is already in use.

Cause: This is caused by the fact that a new MS Word instance is started (at that point 2 Word applications are active) instead of only a new document that has been opened in the same instance as the first document. This is an error in Windows generated by an error in the registry.

Work-around: The solution to this problem by altering the Windows Registry is only for people with an advanced knowledge of Windows. Therefore we prefer to work with a work-around. This means that you best open all documents by using the “open file” feature in the MS Word menu.

Note: Once a error occurred the Add-on has stopped working and you should close and save the file and reopen it again to restart the Add-on.

### 2. Visual Basic error while accessing a Information Box item: “Error 5174; This file could not be found”

Error: In some exceptional cases an error occurs stating that a file could not be found while the user tries to open an help-item in the information box (see fig. 10)

Cause: The Add-on tried to open a .docx file which contains the help data. This file was installed while installing the Add-on. In this case the file was not found because the default file extension, in to which the documents get saved by MS Word, was no longer .docx but .odt. So during the installation the help files were saved as ODT files instead of DOCX files.

Solution: The solution to this problem is to

1. uninstall the Add-on (see chapter 7),
2. change the default file extension in Word back to .docx,
3. install the Add-on again (see chapter 2)
- 4.

To change the default extension in Word you can go to “Options for Word” (Startbutton in Word left upper corner and choose “options for word” in the right lower corner in the menu). Then choose the “Save” option and change the “Save documents in this extension” to “Word-document (.docx)”.



Once a error occurred the Add-on has stopped working and you should close and save the file and reopen it again to restart the Add-on.

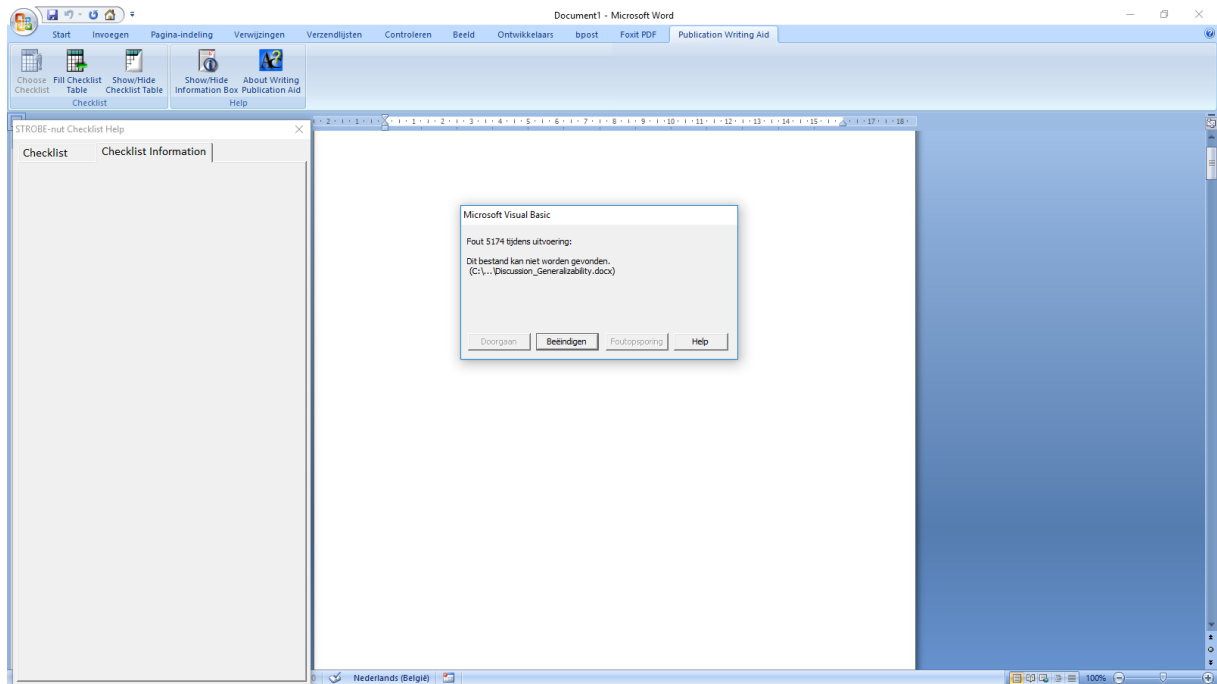


Fig. 10: Error “File not found” – Information Box

## 9. About Publication Writing Aid Add-on

Writing Publication Aid version 2.0

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